



Seven Network Australia expands international presence in television production and forms new United Kingdom based production company

The Seven Network – Australia’s most-watched broadcast television platform – and key executives who led the creative and commercial success of Maverick Television, one of the United Kingdom’s leading independent television production companies, today announced the formation of a new television production company: 7Wonder.

The new joint venture underlines Seven’s commitment to increasing its international presence in the production of television programmes and new formats.

Commenting, Tim Worner, CEO of Seven West Media, said: “Seven West Media is the leading content company in Australia with some of the most successful brands and franchises. The Seven Network is recognised as the leader in Australian produced television programming. Our success is built on our ability to create and own compelling content, and to deliver that content to the biggest audiences across our media platforms. 7 Wonder underlines a key part of our strategy for today and in the future: the expansion of our presence in the production of content.”

7Wonder will focus on the creation of new television programmes and formats, initially for the United Kingdom television market, and is a joint venture between Seven, Alexandra Fraser, Liza Abbott and Simon Ellse. Alex was joint CEO at Maverick Television, responsible for the company’s creative output, for nearly two decades. Before joining Maverick, Liza was a key production executive at ITV in the United Kingdom.

The formation of 7Wonder builds on Seven’s leadership in the creation and production of highly successful programming, including Home and Away, My Kitchen Rules, Border Security, A Place To Call Home, House Rules and Packed to the Rafters. It also follows the company’s formation of the new 7Beyond joint venture with Beyond International which focuses on the creation and development of new programmes and formats for the United States television market. Seven’s original formats and produced programmes are sold into more than 130 markets around the world.

Commenting, Brad Lyons, Seven’s Director of Production, said: “Seven is recognised as a leader in the development and production of Australian television. We are driving our own future with the programmes and content we create and leverage, and we are making deliberate and considered moves into new opportunities not only for our own primary market in Australia but increasingly in international markets.

“7Wonder forms a key element in our plans. And, we couldn’t be happier to be joining with people we have known and regarded highly over a number of years. Alex and Liza have a terrific track record of success. They have passion, ideas and at Maverick ran a great business. We’re looking forward to working with them in the next phase of their careers in this new joint venture as we focus on the growing UK market.”

Alex Fraser said: "Liza, Simon and I knew from the outset the partner we wanted was Seven so we didn't do a 'beauty parade' or go to market. It was very important to us to be in a creative partnership and enjoy a two way sharing of ideas. With support from Sydney, we're able to keep overheads to a minimum and so our model is built around "putting money on screen". 7Wonder will be working across all genres - embracing the rich entertainment portfolio that Seven has created and also building and developing new programmes and formats that will reach an international audience."

Liza Abbott, Alex Fraser and Simon Ellse.

Alex and Liza met working at Maverick Television. Maverick was established over 20 years ago as a regional production house. It became one of the UK's most successful non-scripted independents and was sold to super indie All3 Media Group in 2007.

Alex Fraser – Chief Creative Officer

Alex spearheaded Maverick Television's creative output for just shy of 20 years. Within that time Maverick grew from a small boutique regional independent into one of the country's leading production houses. A raft of her shows is both instantly and globally recognized. These include Embarrassing Bodies, Ten Years Younger, How to Look Good Naked, Billy Connolly's Route 66 and Bizarre ER. Alex has worked internationally and she Exec-produced How to Look Good Naked for Maverick in LA. Before joining Maverick, Alex worked for nine years at the BBC as Reporter, Producer, Director and Commissioning Editor. She has also written several books based on TV formats.

Liza Abbott – CEO

Liza has over 20 years of industry experience – across production, broadcasting and commercial exploitation. She is as comfortable developing and securing commissions as she is exploiting a commercial deal or striking up a partnership agreement with leading talent. On joining Maverick (in a purely commercial role) within 12 months she had managed to increase ancillary exploitation values for the company by over 400%. Earlier in her career she spent close to 10 years at ITV, where she worked in a partnership role with a Creative Director to build a production hub from scratch. Within 6 years that hub was producing over 1,000 hours of new make terrestrial programming each year, had a headcount of over 300, split across 3 cities and whose net profits would have placed it within the country's top 3 performing indies. She subsequently went on to help ITV to launch their own indie start-up fund and has also been 'Director of Production and New Business' for IMG when it was the UK's largest super-indie.

Simon Ellse – CFO

Simon qualified as a chartered accountant with Ernst and Young, having previously studied law at Durham University. He has twenty five years of experience in senior finance roles in the media sector. Simon has been critical to the launch of a number of startup businesses in the creative industries and enjoys a strong track record in growing new businesses.